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S M F. # 26.1

13 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : PFIAB Discussion of OXCART Phase-out

1. This memorandum is for your information only.
2. The following points are considered appropriate for use in your meeting with PFIAB on the OXCART phase-out issue.
 - a. The OXCART vehicle has performed most effectively in thirteen missions over North Viet Nam and thus is a known, reliable reconnaissance capability.
 - b. It is difficult to make a one-to-one comparison between OXCART and the SR-71 since they were designed for two different missions. The SR-71 is a two-man aircraft built primarily for post strike reconnaissance purposes, whereas the OXCART was designed for the type of mission it is now flying.
 - c. The OXCART has more, and, we believe better, jamming equipment aboard which increases its chances of survival over a defended area.
 - d. The OXCART camera system covers at least twice as much area per flight (53 mile swath width versus 26 miles for the SR-71) and is demonstrating a ground resolution capability of just over a foot. The figures quoted for SR-71 achievement to date are on the order of two feet.

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APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: AUG 2007

Office of the Director
Central Intelligence Agency

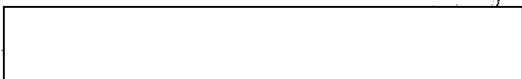
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e. The OXCART has an inherent altitude advantage over the SR-71 which is also a factor in its ability to survive over denied areas.

3. In addition to these technical factors you may wish to mention the difference in use of a military aircraft versus a civilian espionage aircraft, but I recognize this is an argument which is difficult to make and may not be desirable to raise. I do feel that the type of command control exercised over OXCART, specifically that it is literally controlled from Headquarters and not by a field commander, is important but of course it may be contended that such control could be exercised over the SR-71.

4. As to the financial situation, we have indicated that we could operate for the remainder of FY 1968 for an additional 32.8 million dollars. Also, it may be well to note that we believe we could operate on a continuing basis for a cost of about 65 million per year, although that figure would vary somewhat year to year, depending on improvements, etc. We have just completed our first cut costing for the three months extension discussed at EXCOM and by really tightening our belts we think we can get by for something under 15 million. The figure we are proposing to submit to Dr. Flax is 14.5 million.

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CARL E. DUCKETT
Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology

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